



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Floodproofing Your Home

- If shallow flooding of less than 2 feet is anticipated, you can add a waterproof veneer to the exterior walls and seal all openings, including doors, to prevent the entry of water. A licensed contractor should be retained. Waterproof veneers will not work if the flood exceeds 2 feet because the pressure from the flood is likely to exceed the strength of the walls. Also a floodwall around basement windows can be constructed to protect the basement from low-level flooding.
- Install sewer backflow valves if flooding would threaten to cause sewage from sanitary sewer lines to back up into houses through drain pipes. These backups not only cause damage that is difficult to repair but also create health hazards. Backflow valves are designed to block drain pipes temporarily and prevent flow into the house.
- If your basement is likely to be flooded, you should relocate the electrical panel above the flood level. If the space is not high enough to allow elevation within the basement, the panel may be moved to an upper floor or attic space.
- Heating and hot-water systems, washers, and dryers can be elevated on a platform at least 12 inches above the flood level or they can be moved to a higher level.
- Never store anything that is valuable or irreplaceable in a basement that may flood.
- Two approaches can be used to protect air conditioner compressors that are located outdoors. The most effective is to mount the compressor above the flood level on the wall. A less effective but cheaper approach is to elevate the compressor on a platform made of blocks, bricks, or treated solid lumber. To resist the forces of wind and flowing water, anchoring of the platform is recommended.
- If substantial flooding is possible, elevating your home is the most effective floodproofing method next to demolition and relocation. New construction in flood hazard areas must have the lowest floor at or above the base (100-year) floodplain level.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency